

Message Text

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TAGS: ETEL, ITU, EAID, XA, US
SUBJECT: ITU ADMINISTRATIVE COUNCIL: AFRICAN INITIATIVE ON
TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE

REF: GENEVA 8229

1. AFRICAN DRAFT RESOLUTION, DISTRIBUTED PRIVATELY TO
USDEL AT ITU ADMINISTRATIVE COUNCIL CURRENTLY UNDERWAY
AT GENEVA, HAS AS ITS OPERATIVE PARAGRAPHS FOLLOWING TEXT:

QUOTE IT IS THEREFORE PROPOSED THAT WORKING GROUP
CONSISTING OF A LIMITED NUMBER OF COUNCILLORS MEET BETWEEN
THE SESSIONS OF THE COUNCIL TO PREPARE FOR THE NEXT
SESSION OF THE COUNCIL THE FIRST DRAFT OF A REPORT OF THE
WHOLE WHICH WOULD BE DRAWN UP FOR THE NEXT PLENIPOTENTIARY
CONFERENCE.

THE MANDATE OF THIS GROUP WOULD BE AS FOLLOWS:

(1) TO STUDY THE POSSIBILITY OF CREATING AND
SUPPLYING (WITH AMPLE MEANS) A SPECIAL FUND SUCH AS EXISTS
IN OTHER INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS;
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(2) TO DEFINE THE FIELDS OF PRIORITY ACTIVITY OF
THE DEVELOPING COUNTRIES WHICH COULD BE FINANCED FROM
SUCH A FUND (NATIONAL SYSTEMS, THEIR FORMATION...)
(3) TO DEFINE THE MEANS OF UTILIZING THESE FUNDS;
(4) TO PROPOSE WORK METHODS FOR THE COUNCIL IN THE
GENERAL FRAMEWORK OF THE ACTIVITIES OF ITU, PARTICULARLY
IN THE FIELD OF TECHNICAL COOPERATION. END QUOTE

2. USDEL HAS ALREADY INFORMED AFRICAN DELEGATES INFORMALLY OF U.S. OPPOSITION TO DRAWING ON REGULAR ITU BUDGET TO PROVIDE TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE ON NATIONAL BASIS. USDEL HAS ALERTED AFRICAN COUNTRIES TO RISK THEY RUN OF LOSING UNDP FUNDS IN EQUIVALENT AMOUNTS IF THEY SUCCEED IN OBTAINING TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE FUNDING FROM REGULAR ITU BUDGET OVER OBJECTIONS OF DONOR COUNTRIES. AFRICAN DELS, IN RESPONSE, SAY THEY DO NOT CONSIDER LOSS OF UNDP FUNDS IMPORTANT FOR TELECOMMUNICATION ADMINISTRATIONS SINCE IN THEIR VIEW UNDP ASSISTANCE IN THIS AREA IS NOT OF SIGNIFICANT BENEFIT. THEY ACKNOWLEDGED, BUT WERE UNMOVED BY, OUR ARGUMENT THAT THOUGH TELECOMMUNICATION ADMINISTRATIONS MIGHT BE INDIFFERENT TO POSSIBLE CONSEQUENCES OF PROPOSED COURSE ON UNDP FUNDING, GOVERNMENTS WOULD TAKE DIFFERENT VIEW. (SEVERAL AFRICAN DELS STATE UNDP REGIONAL REPRESENTATIVES DO NOT MEET THEIR NEEDS AND THAT VOLUNTARY COUNTRY ASSISTANCE IN ITU HAS PROVEN DISAPPOINTING IN QUALITY. ON THE OTHER HAND, INDIAN REP, REPRESENTING VIEW OF MORE DEVELOPED ASIAN COUNTRY, SPOKE HIGHLY OF REGIONAL REPS.)

3. FRENCH REP HAS ALREADY INDICATED HIS SYMPATHY WITH AFRICAN POSITION AND IN PRIVATE DISCUSSION WITH USDEL EMPHASIZED HIS PREFERENCE FOR BILATERAL TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE. FRENCH REP'S POSITION IS CONSISTENT WITH LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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HIS GOVT'S POLICY OF SHOWING SUPPORT, ON POLITICAL-ECONOMIC GROUNDS, FOR AFRICAN PROPOSALS. WE DO NOT BELIEVE OTHER DEVELOPED COUNTRIES WILL FOLLOW FRENCH LINE AT ADMINISTRATIVE COUNCIL. BRITISH AND SWEDISH DELS, HOWEVER, WILL NOT OPPOSE A WORKING GROUP SINCE THEY DO NOT WISH TO APPEAR UNSYMPATHETIC TO NEEDS OF DEVELOPING COUNTRIES. ISSUE FOR DEVELOPED COUNTRIES IS TIMING OF ESTABLISHMENT OF WORKING GROUP AND TERMS OF REFERENCE. REFTTEL PROVIDES MORE DETAIL ON THIS POINT, INCLUDING INDIAN DEL'S COUNTERPROPOSAL. VANDEN HEUVEL

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